

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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POST

### ‘Spring Breakers’ Director Harmony Korine Is Invading The New York Art World

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*Drunken Flexers, 2013, Oil, latex, and spray paint on canvas, 82 x 71 inches © Harmony Korine. Courtesy of Gagosian Gallery. Photography by Robert McKeever.*

Harmony Korine, the cult filmmaker behind last year’s cinematic hallucination “Spring Breakers,” is now a painter. The divisive figure, loved and reviled for his fragmented narratives, disturbing yet oddly tantalizing material and obsession with the absurd, is taking his penchant for all things ambiguous and seductive to the canvas. With an exhibition titled “Shooter,” the man behind movies including “Gummo” and “Kids” will receive an impressively swanky debut at Gagosian this summer.

At around this time a year ago, millennials everywhere were humming Skrillex, fashioning makeshift balaclavas and chanting “spring break forever!” whenever the opportunity arose. “Shooters,” though bereft of James Franco and any rebellious ex-Disney stars, features Korine’s signature spirit of creation on his own terms with little respect or care for what an artwork “should” be. Instead of employing traditional painting methods, Korine opts for squeegees, leftover house paint and masking tape as his artistic weapons, yielding artworks that don’t aim for the brain or the heart, but a particular spot in the gut.

For his “Starburst” paintings, Korine overlaps strips of masking tape on an unprimed canvas, applying primary colors on top with a broom as his paintbrush. When the tape is removed, what’s left is an improvised and explosive visual event. The abstracted imagery recalls Korine’s

description of “Spring Breakers” as a piece of “pop poetry,” indulging in the primal magnificence of red, yellow and blue with little regard for what’s outside the frame, what it means, or who gets it.

The “Loop” paintings, more closely mimicking Korine’s film process, feature young people dressed up and photographed in alleyways, donning the guise of elderly folk. The resulting images are collaged and contorted on the canvas, remixing experiments in serial motion previously enacted by Eadweard Muybridge and Andy Warhol. Some works are reworked and painted over for years, incorporating ghostly figures and letters reminiscent of another filmmaker-cum-artist, David Lynch.

This isn’t Korine’s first foray into fine art. In 2011 he collaborated with Rita Ackerman on “Shadow Fux,” a far freakier artistic endeavor based on his film “Trash Humpers.” This places Korine a bit ahead of the massive trove of celebrities dipping their toes into the art world’s waters -- Shia LaBeouf, Jay Z, George W. Bush, the list goes on -- though we’re sure the film cred came in handy in scoring the whole Gagosian gig.

Korine’s uncanny ability to create images that attract and repel, entrance and horrify, translates reasonably well from film to paint. Without the boobs and techno music, we doubt his artwork will amass the following of his addictive cinematic work, but we don’t expect he’ll be receiving the flack his “Spring Breakers” star James Franco experienced during his recent flopped Pace exhibition either.

What do you think of Korine's work? Are his canvases good enough to show in one of the nation's premiere galleries or should the art world put an end to all its hopeless stargazing? Let us know your thoughts in the comments.